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5 August 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: CDP  
FROM: DCO  
SUBJECT: COVER AND DECEPTION  
Cover and Deception Talks in  
London July 1949 in connection  
with BOPHED.

1. Introduction

Prior to [ ] and my departure for London 16 July 1949, [ ] called to MI/6, London to the effect that the WPC Cover and Deception officer was interested in exploring the possibilities of formulating a cover plan including tactical operational deception for protection of activities in connection with BOPHED.

2. General

In the course of operational talks with the British an informal committee developed for consideration of the cover and deception possibilities. The following British attended all discussions: [ ] who is Deputy Chief of the Middle East "P" Section of MI/6; [ ] member of a sub-committee of the Hollar Committee and of a sub-committee of the J10; [ ] representing R/5 of MI/6.

The British accepted the deception limitations placed on the BOP and recognized that the traditional theory of strategic deception was not to be the subject of the conversations. Their approach to the subject suggested that they were not at that time prepared to consider broad deception and that on the other hand, they were principally interested in defining and establishing covers for specific activities in connection with the operation. Thus, it was agreed at the outset that the primary objective of the conference was the preparation of a Cover Plan.

Covers for activities in connection with operation Valuable had been established by [ ] and these covers, in fact, formed the heart of the theory of the cover plan. The objective of the Cover Plan was determined to be the developing of means and methods by provision and maintenance of suitable cover for installations, personnel and specific acts to permit denial of evidence of British-American implication in Valuable Field and above all, to prevent evidence of implication falling into Albanian or Soviet hands.

British hesitation to consider positive or strategic deception at this time may be attributed to the uncertainty of certain political eventualities, particularly the course of action to be taken by the Yugoslav government. [ ] stated, "we should not embark on any scheme which would lead to embarrassment if Tito's forces, with or without our complicity, move into Albania at some stage of the operation." In addition, the British were

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be reconnoitred in detail, and with this end in view, a small reconnaissance force (composed largely of Albanian exiles and Greeks having local knowledge) with a strength of up to fifty is being mobilised. The extent of the reconnaissance will be

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not prepared to formulate specific objectives until the results of Valuable, strictly a reconnaissance operation, are known. Furthermore, as the talks went forward it became evident to all that so many political intangibles would appear in the course of the operation that the determination of deception means depends on the political requirements of the moment. In all cover and deception in connection with this operation we must be prepared to recognize that the measures and channels employed will eventually, as the political plan unfolds, be recognized to have been deception. For this reason, we are limited to low grade methods and techniques.

[ ] comments in appreciation of the essential security of the operation contributed to the decision that we must, for the present, limit ourselves to avoiding implication. [ ] points out that it has been impossible to mask from any member of the committee, or for that matter practically any Albanian in exile in Italy, Greece, Turkey or Egypt, the fact that operations as such are contemplated by a committee under Anglo-American sponsorship. Rumors of such action have in fact been current among all Albanian exiles for the past few months. Hope for security, short-lived at best, lies in the vast number of rumors floating around. We may assume that activities undertaken in Albania by her closer neighbors will contribute to the confusion to our advantage. [ ] stated that we must face the fact that news of this and other projected committees and operations have been openly discussed by Albanians in letters, over the telephone, through open mail and by word of mouth.

In addition, at least one intelligence service, that of the Italians, is sufficiently informed on our activities as to render positive deception attempts inadvisable and even dangerous. It was our conclusion that it is impossible effectively to disguise to an unfriendly intelligence or security organization our activities and intentions and that the most we can hope to accomplish is to be in a position to deny with some degree of plausibility our purposeful implication in activities in connection with Valuable Fland.

Based on the conversations held in London the following plan of objectives and methods was prepared by the DCO for OPC consideration and approval. It is understood that the specific action undertaken in connection with this plan will be determined by means of communication between London and Washington, or by conference as the need arrives.

### 3. Cover Requirements and Cover Plan Guide for Valuable Fland.

The following broad objectives are set down as a basis for the formulation of cover means in protection of operations Valuable and Fland.

General: To deny evidence of British American implication in Valuable Fland and above all, to prevent evidence of implication falling into Albanian or Soviet hands by provision and maintenance of suitable cover for installations, personnel, and specific acts.

Phase One: Before the beginning of and during the early phases of Valuable operations and during Phase One of Fland, the following objectives will apply:

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a. To mislead Albanian and Soviet governments as to the detailed nature of our intentions by affording the covers to installations handling Albanians or connected with Albanian operations as follows:

(1) British Training Area at Malta for operation Valuable — Pioneer Training and Disposal Unit.

Comment: This is in fact a standard British Army Unit.

(2) Cyrenaica Training Area — RAF Guard Training Unit for Foreign Levies.

Comment: In the event of capture or defection of any personnel trained as described in paragraphs (1) and (2) the British are prepared to admit that they were trained by these units, but will emphatically deny responsibility for or knowledge of any action taken by the trainees.

(3) [ ] Combined Security Board.

b. To control the extent of knowledge gained by Greek, Italian and French governments.

c. To provide Greek, Italian and French governments with plausible answers in the event of attacks in their press or in their government forums arising from Soviet charges, the exodus of Albanian personnel from their countries, or any other repercussions arising from Valuable Fiasco activities.

Phase Two: Following the commencement of Valuable Fiasco operations and Phase Two of Fiasco the following objectives will apply:

a. To provide U.S. and British authorities with a plausible answer if accused of Valuable Fiasco in the press or before the United Nations.

b. To prepare way for a cover plan in the event Phase Three of Valuable Fiasco is to be executed.

Phase Three:

a. To maintain cover and security in initial phases of operations.

b. To supply British American governments with answers in event of disaster.

c. To prepare way for and justify British American support in the event the operations show promise of success.

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d. To indicate if determined at the time to be politically desirable, that such support does not carry with it admission of having planned and organized and prepared operations.

#### 4. Tentative Over-All Cover Story

In the course of the London conversation there was considerable speculation as to the operational possibilities of Phase 3 and the direction that Phase 3 might be expected to follow. It seems that British thinking is tending more toward the conception of an international brigade to serve as cover for any anti-Hadja Albanian para-military efforts which might have as appear to have originated from Greece. With this in mind, the British put to paper the following tentative cover story for operation Valuable. Discussion of it introduced many political considerations which might make it undesirable. It was conceived of the spirit of the growing impression that Valuable Friend will assume a more para-military than clandestine nature.

Its paragraph 2 is intended as a secondary story to the basic cover of the training units. Initially the Foreign Office discouraged any plan that would include either as cover or in fact operations from Greek territory. MI/6 intends nonetheless to seek Foreign Office approval for this paper in general and specifically, approval for using the Greek Civil War as a cause and basis upon which to build a cover story for Valuable Friend.

#### 5. Speculation on Phase Three

It is interesting to report at this time evidence that these talks and the growing belief that with the general activity in Albania on the part of so many countries will cause a tightening of military and political security and that the possibility of an overthrow of the government by interior forces or of commencing guerilla activity in the mountains will not be accomplished without more of a fight and greater commitment than was originally contemplated. Comments by Alderdice on the lack of true Albanian nationalism, his belief that dissatisfaction was far less among the majority of the Albanians who live in the mountains than has been reported and his doubts as to whether refugees constitute an incitement to revolt, have brought forward the thought that a suggestion of a military effort would be required to stiffen Albanian irregulars and "liberating refugees". A cover plan for suggesting that such military backing, at the appointed time, exists, was most informally discussed as a possible maneuver in the event that Policy at a later date should determine such stiffening to be necessary.

[ ]

Enclosure:

1. Cover story for Valuable.

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Cover Story for OPERATION "VALUABLE"Present Greek Situation

The Greek civil war appears to provide a plausible basis upon which to build a suitable cover story.

1. The open Greek/Albanian frontier is being used by Communist rebel forces who are operating against the Greek nationalist army in Northern Greece. These forces can be formed in Albanian territory, backed by the Albanian government and launched across the frontier against the Greek army. They can furthermore, when opposed by superior forces be withdrawn across the frontier in the reverse direction, and regrouped with impunity in this mountainous region. The result of this is that the position in North-West Greek Macedonia remains in a state of flux, and is also open to continual attack, which in turn affects seriously the whole outcome of the civil war.

The Story.

2. Taking into account the above state of affairs, the Americans in consultation with the British have come to the conclusion that unless this frontier situation can be dealt with, and the frontier sealed to the extent of its use being denied to the Communist forces, additional assistance needed by the Greek Nationalists from the Western Powers will amount to throwing good money after bad. It has been decided that immediate steps should be taken to rectify the situation. An operation divided into two phases is being contemplated.

3. First Phase. Before taking concrete action it has been decided that the situation on the Greek/Albanian frontier should be reconnoitred in detail, and with this end in view, a small reconnaissance force (composed largely of Albanian exiles and Greeks having local knowledge) with a strength of up to fifty is being mobilised. The extent of the reconnaissance will be

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confined strictly to the Greek/Albanian frontier, and will strive to avoid any activity on the Greek/Yugoslav and Albanian/Yugoslav borders.

4. Phase Two. Dependent on the result of the reconnaissance an International brigade will be formed which will operate from Greek territory on the Greek/Albanian frontier, with the object of sealing off the frontier, and thereby denying its use to Communist rebel forces. Here again the greatest care will be exercised to avoid activity on the Albanian/Yugoslav frontier. Although every care will be exercised to avoid activities on Albanian territory, the International brigade acting as a guerilla force may be difficult to control, and it is foreseen that more than likely it will "trespass" into Albania from time to time. The Americans and British cannot deny that the International brigade is supported by them, but they will categorically deny that the object of their sponsoring such a force is any other than for the reason already mentioned, and if Albanian nationalists rally to this force, as they well might do, it would be entirely fortuitous but it would, incidentally, demonstrate the instability of the Enver Hoxha Regime in Albania.

Tito Situation.

5. It is realised by the democracies that the knowledge of such an operation is bound to come to the notice of Tito, and it will be difficult, if not impossible, for them to influence his subsequent action. It is however, felt that if activities can be confined to regions exclusively those which are not contiguous with Yugo-Slavia, and furthermore, when it is maintained that the object is pro-Greek and in no way connected with a nationalist movement in Albania, he may prefer to see Russian Communism in Albania suffer a setback, even at the expense of "Imperialist" success, rather than invade Albania himself and incur the wrath of America and Great Britain on whom he must rely for trade. We should

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therefore play on the theme that Tito would welcome a  
Cominform setback, although at the same time we should not  
expect his reaction to have any motive other than his own cause.

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26th July, 1949.

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